



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

City of San Diego
Development Services Department

New Service

'No Plan' Permits Available Online With SimplePermits

Permits for plumbing and gas, mechanical and electrical work not needing plans — more than 60 percent of the building permits issued — can now be purchased on-line from the City of San Diego.



The "SimplePermits" program means customers can complete application forms and pay for the permits from their home, office and laptop computers -- anywhere with a connection to the internet.

During 2000, 24,913 building-type permits were issued in the City of San Diego. Of those, 15,066 were no-plan permits. This 60 percent of the city's permits can now be purchased over the web site, eliminating trips to city offices.

This system is designed for the plumbing or electrical contractor who purchases many permits at one time. It has been specially programmed so contractors can easily change addresses to book permits without having to change their own data.

The system was developed by San Diego Data Processing Corporation with the city's Development Services and Information Technology and Communications departments.

Testing on the system showed one plumbing contractor ordering 40 water heater installation permits in one session. Before SimplePermits, an individual permit application form had to be completed for each permit, then hand-delivered or faxed to the Development Services Department office.

Permits available through SimplePermits are for work not requiring plans that are checked by the Development Services Department. Work covered by these permits includes water heater or furnace replacement, moving or adding a natural gas line, or adding or moving electric sockets. Contractors performing simple electrical work and plumbing repair are encouraged to use the service.

An inspection can also be requested at the same time permits are ordered.

With SimplePermits, the only City employee the customer will see is the inspector, who is there to ensure the work's safety and compliance with the building code.

To order the permits, customers visit the Development Services Department section of the City of San Diego web site at:

<http://www.sandiego.gov/development-services/industry/simplepermits.shtml>

The project address and a MasterCard or Visa credit card are needed. Contractors will also need to have proof of workers compensation insurance.

Customers proceed through several screens which complete the information normally on the permit application. The California Building Code requires that the city collect information on each permit, such as the applicant's name, contractor and property address.

Owner-builders, such as home owners doing work on their own homes, can also use the system. Proof of workers compensation insurance is not required for owner-builders.

For more information, see the web site or call (619) 446-5300.

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format for persons with disabilities. To
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Q: What is a no-plan permit?

A: A no-plan permit is for work that does not need a plan to be reviewed by the city before construction. Using SimplePermits, you can request a plumbing and gas, electrical, or mechanical no-plan permit. Work covered by these permits include water heater or furnace replacement, moving or adding a natural gas line, or adding or moving electric sockets.

Q: What is a plumbing and gas permit?

A: A plumbing and gas permit is an authorization to repair or construct a complete or portion of a plumbing and/or gas system. Permitted work must be in compliance with the 1998 California Plumbing Code, as adopted by the City of San Diego, and City of San Diego Municipal Code. An inspection is required for each permit.

Examples of work requiring a plumbing and gas permit includes addition, installation or replacement of any plumbing or gas fixture, such as: water heaters, sewer systems, grease traps, lavatories, roof drains, shower drains, sinks, gas meters, gas outlets, water softeners, water service and drinking fountains.

Q: What is an electrical permit?

A: An electrical permit is an authorization to repair or construct a complete or portion of an electrical system. Permitted work must be in compliance with the 1996 National Electrical Code as amended by the State of California and adopted by the City of San Diego, and City of San Diego Municipal Code. An inspection is required for each permit.

Examples of work requiring an electrical permit include: Installation of new electrical outlets, moving electrical outlets or switches, adding or replacing circuits, adding or replacing phase services, installing a temporary power pole, or adding new "hard wired" electrical appliances or fixtures.

Q: What is a mechanical permit?

A: A mechanical permit is an authorization to repair or construct a complete or partial mechanical system. Permitted work must be in compliance with the 1998 California Plumbing Code and 1998 California Mechanical Code, as adopted by the City of San Diego, and City of San Diego Municipal Code. An inspection is required for each permit.

Examples of work requiring a mechanical permit include adding or replacing any of the following: A furnace (wall or floor), heaters, air conditioners, appliance vents for chimneys, refrigerator compressors, boilers, chillers, fan coil units, heat pumps, air handlers, duct work, vent fans and systems, and exhaust hoods and ducts.

Q: Who can use SimplePermits?

A: The property owner or contractor performing the work.

Q: Can I apply for a permit for my mother, aunt or a friend via SimplePermit?

A: No. To obtain a permit for someone else, you will be acting as their agent and an authorization letter is needed. To register as their

agent, visit our downtown office or use the PermitFax service.

Q: What if I live outside of the City of San Diego?

A: We only issue permits for property located in the City of San Diego.

Q: How long does it take to process a SimplePermit?

A: Permits are processed from 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. Monday-Friday, excluding holidays. If the permit is requested before noon (Pacific Time) on a business day, it will be processed the same day. Invalid or incorrect information on the request will cause delay. Multiple permit requests can take two business days to process.

Q: What credit cards can I use?

A: MasterCard and Visa only.

Q: How many permits can I apply for using SimplePermits?

A: At the same project address, there applica-



tion can be made for a maximum of three permits. Contractors can use the SimplePermits to apply for multiple permits for multiple project addresses. After paying for each project address, contractors will be given the option to apply for another permit for a different project address.

Q: When does my permit expire?

A: Work must begin and an inspection made within 180 days, otherwise the permit expires.

Q: Does a licensed contractor have to do the work?

A: No. The property owner can complete the job. A licensed contractor can be hired to do all or some of the work.

Q: How do I check to see if a contractor is in good standing?

A: The Contractors State License Board, which issues the licenses, has a web site where you can check the information. The address is: www.cslb.ca.gov/index.html

Q: When am I required to show proof of Workers' Compensation Insurance?

A: Proof of Workers' Compensation Insurance is required at the time of permit issuance for all work that is being done by employees.

Q: Am I required to have an inspection?

A: Yes. All no-plan permits require an inspection. The project is not legally complete until it passes the final inspection.

Q: How do I schedule an inspection?

A: Request an inspection when submitting your SimplePermit, or, call our InspectionLine at (858) 581-7111 at your convenience. For inspection questions, call (858) 492-5070.

Q: Can I use this process to correct a code violation?

A: No. Contact Neighborhood Code Compliance at (619) 533-6128 to first clear the violation.

Q: Are there other ways to submit a permit request?

A: Yes. These permits are available:

- The Development Services Department, 1222 First Ave.;
- At the Development Services Department Inspection Services Office, 9601 Ridgehaven Court, Suite 220;
- Via fax. Call (619) 446-5000 to use the PermitFax system;
- Community Service Centers throughout the city;

Q: What if I don't get a permit?

A: If a permit, when needed, is not obtained before construction, city codes and regulations have been violated. The property owner and/or tenant is subject fines and penalties. You will be required to obtain permits for the work and it must pass inspection, or you will have to return the structure or site to its original condition. In addition, without the inspection, your work may not be safe, endangering you and anyone using the structure.

Q: What if I have a permit but never called for inspection?

A: Generally, permits expire after 180 days if no inspection has been made. In order for the project to be complete, it must pass final inspection. If a permit expires before final inspection, the project is in violation of City codes. To reactive the old permit or apply for a new one, call (619) 446-5000.

Q: What if I'm not adding anything, I'm just changing existing electrical?

A: When electrical work doesn't include adding any circuits, you are charged for the current service at the site, usually 50-175 amps or more than 200 amps.

Q: What codes does the city use?

A: Construction codes enforced by the City of San Diego are set by the State of California and are contained in Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations. They are: the 1997 California Building Code, 1998 California Plumbing Code, 1998 California Mechanical Code and 1996 National Electrical Code as amended by the State of California.

For more information on construction permits and inspections, see the Development Services Department brochures "Construction Permit Tips for Home Owners," and "Construction Permit Tips for Small Business" or call us at (619) 446-5000.